

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1794

To improve the literacy and English skills of limited English proficient individuals, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 29, 2007

Mr. GRIJALVA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To improve the literacy and English skills of limited English proficient individuals, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Families Learning and
5 Understanding English Together Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Census Bureau reports that 17.9 per-
9 cent of United States households speak a language
10 other than English at home.

1 (2) Many parents in many recently-immigrated
2 families speak little to no English, possess low lit-
3 eracy skills in their native language due to limited
4 education, and frequently struggle to assist their
5 children’s English language development.

6 (3) The United States is a nation of immi-
7 grants, and even today, according to the 2004 up-
8 date of the Census, over 34,000,000 individuals who
9 live in the United States were born outside the coun-
10 try.

11 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

12 The purpose of this Act is to improve the educational,
13 social, and economic advancement of families with limited
14 English proficient individuals in need of literacy skills by
15 expanding and enhancing family literacy services for such
16 families.

17 **SEC. 4. COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.**

18 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From funds made
19 available pursuant to section 9, and after reserving funds
20 under section 9(b), the Secretary may award grants to
21 family literacy providers to provide, directly or through a
22 contract with another provider, family literacy services de-
23 signed for families with limited English proficient individ-
24 uals. Each grant under this Act shall be for a period of

1 1 year and may be renewed for a total of 5 additional
2 years.

3 (b) APPLICATION.—Family literacy providers who de-
4 sire to receive a grant under this Act shall submit an ap-
5 plication at such time, containing such information, and
6 in such manner as the Secretary may require. Such appli-
7 cation shall include the following:

8 (1) An assurance that services provided with
9 funds under this Act shall be provided to the hard-
10 est-to-reach populations, including populations with
11 the greatest economic and social need.

12 (2) A description of the services that will be
13 provided with funds under this Act, including how
14 the services will be based on research-based reading
15 instruction for limited English proficient children
16 and parents.

17 (3) A description of the outcome measures, con-
18 sistent with section 6, that are based on scientifically
19 based research and will be employed by the family
20 literacy provider to measure the effectiveness of
21 services provided with funds under this Act.

22 (4) An assurance that, in providing family lit-
23 eracy services through the grant, the family literacy
24 provider will collaborate with one or more of the fol-
25 lowing:

1 (A) A local educational agency.

2 (B) An elementary school.

3 (C) A secondary school.

4 (D) A nonprofit entity.

5 (c) GRANT AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant under
6 this Act for a fiscal year shall not be less than \$150,000
7 or more than \$1,000,000.

8 (d) SERVICES REQUIREMENTS.—Family literacy
9 services under this Act shall be provided in sufficient in-
10 tensity in terms of hours, and shall be of sufficient dura-
11 tion, to make sustainable changes in a family and shall
12 integrate all of the following activities:

13 (1) Interactive literacy activities between par-
14 ents and their children.

15 (2) Training for parents regarding how to be
16 the primary teacher for their children and full part-
17 ners in the education of their children.

18 (3) Parent literacy training that leads to eco-
19 nomic self-sufficiency.

20 (4) An age-appropriate education to prepare
21 children for success in school and life experiences.

22 (e) SPECIAL RULE.—Family literacy services under
23 this Act may be provided to a family only if—

24 (1) each parent in the family has attained 16
25 years of age; and

1 (2) the family has at least one child from birth
2 who has not yet attained 8 years of age.

3 **SEC. 5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.**

4 (a) **ACTIVITIES BY SECRETARY.**—The Secretary, act-
5 ing through the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and
6 Secondary Education, shall provide technical assistance
7 and training to grantees under this Act for the purposes
8 described in subsection (c).

9 (b) **ACTIVITIES BY NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.**—

10 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall make
11 grants to, or enter into contracts with, at least 2 eli-
12 gible national organizations to provide technical as-
13 sistance and training to grantees under this Act for
14 the purposes described in subsection (c).

15 (2) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “el-
16 igible national organization” means a national orga-
17 nization with expertise in providing family literacy
18 services to limited English proficient populations.

19 (c) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of technical assistance
20 and training provided under this section are the following:

21 (1) Assisting grantees under this Act to im-
22 prove the quality of their family literacy services.

23 (2) Enabling such grantees that demonstrate
24 the effective provision of family literacy services,
25 based on improved outcomes for children and their

1 parents, to provide technical assistance and training
2 to government agencies and to family literacy pro-
3 viders that work in collaboration with such agencies
4 to improve the quality of their family literacy serv-
5 ices.

6 (3) Assisting such grantees in the implementa-
7 tion of literacy curriculum and training activities, in-
8 cluding curriculum and training activities that sup-
9 port building on a child's native language.

10 (d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days
11 after the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall sub-
12 mit to the Committee on Education and Labor of the
13 House of Representatives and the Committee on Health,
14 Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report
15 on the technical assistance and training provided pursuant
16 to subsections (a) and (b). Each such report shall describe
17 the actions taken by the Secretary to ensure that such
18 technical assistance and training is of high-quality and is
19 responsive to the needs of grantees under this Act.

20 **SEC. 6. OUTCOME MEASURES.**

21 The Secretary shall require each family literacy pro-
22 vider receiving a grant under this Act to meet culturally
23 appropriate and competent outcome measures described in
24 the provider's application under section 4, including out-
25 come measures with respect to—

- 1 (1) acquisition of the English language, includ-
2 ing improved educational levels;
- 3 (2) literacy skills and building of a home lan-
4 guage;
- 5 (3) improved parenting and life skills;
- 6 (4) the improved ability of parents with limited
7 English proficiency to effectively interact with offi-
8 cials of the schools their children attend;
- 9 (5) improved developmental skills and inde-
10 pendent learning of the children; and
- 11 (6) increased parental participation in their
12 children’s education and home environments that are
13 supportive of educational endeavors.

14 **SEC. 7. EVALUATION.**

15 The Secretary shall conduct an annual evaluation of
16 the grant program under this Act. Such evaluation shall
17 be used by the Secretary—

- 18 (1) for program improvement;
- 19 (2) to further define the program’s goals and
20 objectives; and
- 21 (3) to determine program effectiveness.

22 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

23 For purposes of this Act:

- 24 (1) APPLICATION OF ESEA TERMS.—The terms
25 “elementary school”, “limited English proficient”,

1 “local educational agency”, “scientifically based re-
2 search”, and “secondary school” have the meanings
3 given such terms in section 9101 of the Elementary
4 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
5 7801). The term “scientifically based reading re-
6 search” has the meaning given such term in section
7 1208 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
8 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6368).

9 (2) FAMILY LITERACY PROVIDER.—The term
10 “family literacy provider” means an entity that—

11 (A) is located in a geographic area con-
12 taining at least one public elementary school or
13 secondary school with a majority enrollment of
14 children with limited English proficiency; and

15 (B) is one of the following:

16 (i) A current grantee under subpart 3
17 of part B of title I of the Elementary and
18 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
19 U.S.C. 6381 et seq.) (commonly referred
20 to as “William F. Goodling Even Start
21 Family Literacy Programs”), the Head
22 Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), or any
23 other Federal or State early childhood pro-
24 gram.

25 (ii) An adult education provider.

1 (iii) A local educational agency.

2 (iv) A public or private nonprofit
3 agency.

4 (v) Another entity that has the dem-
5 onstrated ability to provide family literacy
6 services to limited English proficient adults
7 and families.

8 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of Education.

10 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
12 priated to carry out this Act \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal
13 years 2008 through 2013.

14 (b) RESERVATIONS.—From funds made available
15 pursuant to subsection (a) for a fiscal year, the Secretary
16 shall reserve—

17 (1) not more than 2 percent of such funds for
18 conducting the annual evaluation required by section
19 7;

20 (2) \$5,000,000 for technical assistance and
21 training under section 5(a); and

22 (3) \$5,000,000 for technical assistance and
23 training under section 5(b).

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